CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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FINAL RECORD OF THE FIVE HUNDRED AND FORTY-NINTH MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 5 April 1990, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. Shahbaz (Pakistan)

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The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 549th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

In conformity with its programme of work, the Conference continues today its consideration of agenda items 6, "Effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons", and 7, "New types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons; radiological weapons". In accordance with rule 30 of its rules of procedure, however, any member wishing to do so may raise any subject relevant to the work of the Conference.

I have on my list of speakers today the representatives of Egypt and Argentina, as well as the Chairman of the Ad hoc Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Co-operative Measures to Detect and Identify Seismic Events. Dr. Dahlman will introduce the Ad hoc Group's progress report, which is being circulated today as document CD/981. I now give the floor to the representative of Egypt, Ambassador Elarabi.

Mr. ELARABY (Egypt): It is indeed a source of pleasure to see Pakistan presiding over the Conference on Disarmament for the month of April. Egypt and Pakistan have enjoyed, over the years, traditional excellent relations. We assure you, Mr. President, of our full co-operation in the fulfilment of your duties. Your predecessor, Ambassador Ibnou Azikiwe of Nigeria, admirably guided our work during the month of March, and it gives me great pleasure to pay a sincere tribute to his contributions.

The year 1989 brought about unforeseen changes on the European scene, changes which will undoubtedly, in due course, have far-reaching repercussions throughout the world. It is generally accepted now that a new world order is evolving and a new security structure is emerging. What effect this evolving security structure will have on the Conference on Disarmament should be paramount in our deliberations. As the sole disarmament negotiating forum, the Conference on Disarmament has a responsibility to discharge. We should approach the new reality with an open mind - to enhance our contribution it may be necessary to adjust and update our agenda and review our working methods. Several representatives have rightly emphasized that the agenda must be reshaped so as to reflect better the new changes taking place, and to respond to such global challenges. My delegation wholeheartedly endorses this view.

One area which merits more attention is regional security. In such times of interdependence no single nation can find security by itself. World security, as a result, has become the aggregate sum of the security of all the regions around the globe. In the ultimate analysis international security rests on regional security.

A 1981 United Nations study on all the aspects of regional disarmament states in paragraph 143:

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"... the regional disarmament concept must constantly be seen in its right perspective. Though in no way a substitute for general and complete disarmament, it can be an effective complement to global measures and an important constituent in the step-by-step approach to global disarmament. In particular it can facilitate negotiations on some of the areas identified for universal action, and contribute initiatives on other possible disarmament steps promoting stability, mutual confidence and co-operation within the region."

Ambassador Ledogar of the United States, in his statement of 13 March, highlighted the need to explore the possibility of discussing regional security questions and arms races outside the sphere of Europe. Ambassador Rasaputram of Sri Lanka also touched on the issue in his statement of 22 March. In the view of my delegation there are many independent regional initiatives which deserve our attention. One such initiative has been my country's proposal presented to the General Assembly since 1974 on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. A group of experts was assigned the task of preparing a report on the subject. The Secretary-General will present the report to the General Assembly next fall. Can the Conference on Disarmament contribute in this regard? The Assembly has also in the past adopted a stream of resolutions on the denuclearization of Africa. The Disarmament Commission has failed up till now to reach consensus on this important regional issue. I believe all members of the OAU are entitled to expect this important regional disarmament measure to be put under consideration in the Conference on Disarmament.

During previous years aspects of regional disarmament were traditionally considered, inter alia, under the umbrella of item 8. This year there is an imbalance. No ad hoc committee on the comprehensive programme of disarmament has been established. A forum should therefore be devised to rectify this situation in order to afford regional issues suitable consideration. My delegation would like to propose a comprehensive discussion on the issue of regional disarmament within the framework of the CD.

I shall now turn to the chemical weapons convention. At the outset, I wish to pay tribute to the efforts of the former Chairman of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, Ambassador Pierre Morel of France, and the five chairmen of the working groups, for their tireless efforts and their dedication to expediting the preparation of the draft convention. I also welcome the new Chairman, Ambassador Hyltenius of Sweden, and wish him success in his task.

Since I last addressed the subject of chemical weapons in plenary in August 1989, many events have taken place, including the Canberra Government-Industry Conference against Chemical Weapons, the United States-USSR memorandum of understanding in Wyoming, the Ninth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations and the Soviet-American joint statement of 10 February 1990. Yet a breakthrough towards a comprehensive convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons seems at present to be still beyond our reach. We recognize that a considerable degree of progress has been achieved.

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We do, however, realize that we still have a long way to go to finalize the convention. This may be partially attributed to the fact that the 1989 session dealt mainly with "technical" issues. We understand very well the importance of resolving such technical aspects. In the course of the current session we hope meaningful progress can also be made on the political aspects of the draft convention.

Today, I wish to put before the Conference my delegation's reflections on some of these remaining questions.

An issue which attracts special attention, though from different standpoints, is that of the relation of the future convention on chemical weapons to other international agreements. It is our understanding that, in accordance with the general rules of international law and article 30 of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, the chemical weapons convention, being a subsequent legal instrument on the same subject-matter, prevails over any existing international agreement covering the same subject-matter from the moment of its entry into force. Our work would be undone if unilaterally declared "rights" under the 1925 Geneva Protocol were transferred and thereby somehow eternalized in a comprehensive chemical weapons convention. Such attempts should be resisted in order to establish a non-discriminatory convention that contains one single universally applicable legal regime.

My delegation has raised this issue in the past. We consider it a political and not a legal one. No resolution to this problem has materialized, and it seems appropriate to propose that concerned delegations should consult further on this matter. We do hope that Ambassador Hyltenius will be able to reach a successful conclusion on this topic in his consultations on undiminished security.

Amendments are another important issue. This is a substantive and not a procedural matter. It entails highly political and legal considerations. It is the manner by which the parties to an agreement may alter the fundamental obligations when the need arises. With this in mind, the provisions on amendments, regardless of their formulation, should under no circumstances provide for a discriminatory regime that would consequently materialize in dual or multiple legal undertakings. The general rules contained in the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties may serve as guidelines in this respect.

A very important issue is that of sanctions. My delegation has been following closely the preliminary deliberations on this subject. The discussion over this question has clearly demonstrated the highly delicate political nature of the problem. It should be pointed out that the concept of sanctions is much wider than the incorporation of provisions on penal and punitive measures. We should strive for credible security guarantees. It is true that some of the material relevant to this subject is already scattered among the provisions of the draft convention. The end-product, however, should not be a weakened and fragmented edifice on the question of measures to redress situations of violation of and non-compliance with the convention. A clear-cut and credible provision should be expressly incorporated in a

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separate and individual provision, the details and specificities of which may be referred to in relevant provisions, as currently demonstrated in several draft articles. The issue of sanctions will be one of direct cross-reference and linkage between the future Organization and the Security Council, which is the organ vested with primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Confidentiali y cannot be delinked from the issue of verification. We have not yet been able to solve the difficult equation of verification versus confidentiality. Trial inspections have had a role in demonstrating this fact. It is true that a degree of progress in the work on confidentiality and on the guidelines for inspections has been achieved. However, a comprehensive solution to this problem is not in sight. The solution to it should be in the view of my delegation well founded on the inviolability of proprietary rights and information.

Challenge inspections are dependent, in our view, on the outcome of the work on confidentiality. It is highly sensitive and political because it affects the national security of each State party to the convention. The true test of the success of this device hinges on ensuring that no abuses are committed.

On the organizational aspects of the convention, I wish to emphasize the role of the Executive Council. The size and decision-making mechanism should be determined on the basis of the limits of the functional requirements, that is to say, the rapidity of convening meetings and the ability to take timely decisions. All States parties to the Convention should have an opportunity to serve on the Council. My delegation, moreover, does not subscribe to any attempt to create permanent seats.

My delegation has studied attentively the proposal put forward by the Soviet Union and the United States on the "Principles and order of destruction of chemical weapons and chemical weapons production facilities". We subscribe to the view expressed in paragraph 2 (a), which stipulates that "Each State party should destroy all chemical weapons and chemical weapons production facilities ... beginning not later than 12 months, and finishing no later than 10 years, after the convention enters into force". We take it that such an obligation will not be subject to any reservation.

The Conference on Disarmament has been asked to take a decision on the creation of a new additional group in the context of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, to provide "Technical support for the Chairman of the Ad hoc Committee". My delegation has studied this proposal. We appreciate the rationale behind it. However, we recognize the practical problems that lie ahead. One of these is the financial implications of this mechanism. The practical consequence of this is that the envisaged mechanism will result in a one-track dialogue of experts belonging to one group of States without due regard to equitable political and geographical distribution. Our preference is to channel all work through the subsidiary working groups of the Ad hoc Committee.

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Before concluding my remarks on this item, I wish to refer to the statement made by the Ambassador of Sri Lanka on 22 March when he pointed out that "it is ... necessary now to make a renewed effort to tackle the outstanding political issues with a view to taking a decision. Any deflection of the time available to matters of which some could best be handled by a preparatory commission could only lead to a diffusion of focus and loss of momentum". I believe that this point needs to be carefully considered by us.

Our aim is to conclude a convention which will be universally adhered to. One way of approaching this objective is to consider ways and means of involving all United Nations Members in the actual preparation of the convention at a certain stage. An open-ended preparatory commission to precede or follow a ministerial conference could positively contribute towards the universality that we all aspire to attain, and could serve as a useful tool in our quest to encourage universal adherence.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Egypt for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Argentina, Ambassador García Moritán.

Mr. GARCIA MORITAN (Argentina) (translated from Spanish): Mr. President, I am particularly pleased to see you presiding over our deliberations. You are a member of a delegation which has left its mark on the efforts made in this forum. I remember Ambassador Ahmad's successful presidency in 1981 in the then Committee on Disarmament. I know that you and Ambassador Fanal, with whom I enjoy a special friendship, have applied your diplomatic skills to the renewed efforts that we must make in this negotiating body as we conclude the first part of our session.

The Conference on Disarmament is the only negotiating forum for disarmament in which States from Africa, America, Asia, Europe and Oceania participate. This geographical representation confers on this body a unique character and gives it an advantage in concluding universal disarmament treaties which has not been fully utilized up to now. The negotiations on a comprehensive chemical weapons ban offer an example of the special characteristics of the Conference and show to what degree it is possible to advance multilaterally, even when sensitive and complex technical and political aspects are being dealt with, provided there is political will. This is particularly significant if we recall the context in which the structure of the convention began to develop. At that time the principal military Powers in the CW field, whether or not they were members of military alliances, maintained positions and views that originated in security perceptions stemming from a climate of confrontation. No doubt these circumstances affected the pace of work, but - and it is important to point this out - they did not prevent progress. It is, to some extent, understandable that the initial process was characterized by numerous precautions that left their mark on the negotiations. I wonder to what extent we should, today, continue to apply the same logic, and I can well imagine the queries that an inexperienced observer might raise on pausing to examine the text contained in document CD/961. As far as some aspects of the draft convention are concerned, it would seem that the fact that the convention is

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to be implemented in future decades, and that therefore it cannot be viewed on the basis of past perceptions, is totally forgotten. One gets this feeling mainly because certain propositions regarding security are maintained as though they were dogmas. It is as if we did not allow reality to shed its light in the Council Chamber. And of course these propositions give rise to an entire body of provisions whose complexity increases in a geometric proportion to the degree of confidence pursued.

In order to avoid the paradox of drawing up an instrument whose assumptions do not fit in with the international trends that make it feasible, perhaps we should make a major effort to place security for all on a footing more in keeping with the times. We could thus envisage the simplification of the complex and burdensome mechanisms and procedures stipulated in the convention. It is highly unlikely that there could be a more effective guarantee of confidence than the transparency brought about by an international climate characterized by rational negotiations, the generation of a network of industrial, technological and scientific interests and intense international co-operation. My delegation is convinced that we are moving towards that goal. For that reason we consider it essential to maintain the momentum of international efforts to ban chemical warfare.

Several major events in 1989 brought the subject to the forefront of international attention. The multilateral negotiations on a convention continued to add to the enormous amount of work carried out since 1984, to take the date of the first negotiating mandate. In that climate of increasing interaction and understanding, there were bilateral agreements and initiatives that gave renewed vigour to the process and highlighted in particular the will of the United States and the Soviet Union to move forward towards the objectives of the convention. Now, in the final stage, the starring role in our opinion ought to be, and can only be, played by the Conference on Disarmament. In 1990, we would like to see in this room the eminent persons that made 1989 such a special year in the field of chemical weapons.

It is only logical that each of us around this table tends to highlight different aspects of the draft convention. From the standpoint of a State such as my own that has never possessed chemical weapons and does not possess them now, the effectiveness of this instrument depends basically on its ability to create a system that does not jeopardize the ensemble of elements that make up its perception of security. For developing countries, this implies taking into account indivisible factors of a political, economic and technological nature.

In August 1987, the then Argentine representative at the Conference on Disarmament, Ambassador Mario Campora, said that "the chemical weapons convention as we have known it so far would be a non-discriminatory treaty, since all the parties would be on an equal footing once the process of destruction of chemical weapons and existing production facilities had been completed. At that stage the treaty will serve as a model, because it will be unlike the non-proliferation Treaty, which lays down in law the existence of two categories of States: those that possess nuclear weapons and those that do not. ... Thus we have within our reach the possibility of drawing up a

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treaty that would not be discriminatory from the political and military standpoints. It is also important that it should not be discriminatory from an economic and technological viewpoint".

This means that as of its entry into force, the convention must strike a proper balance between rights and obligations. For example, we should begin to consider including elements to compensate for and reduce the existing asymmetry among States parties during the 10-year period in which existing stockpiles will be destroyed. Furthermore, it implies agreement on a clear ban on the use of chemical weapons in any circumstances, as well as verification of compliance. The possibility that a State party to the convention might reserve the right to retaliate during the period of destruction cannot be justified in our way of seeing things, even from a military standpoint, inasmuch as the concept of chemical deterrence has fewer and fewer advocates. For the convention to be effective, basically, it must set up a rapid and transparent destruction mechanism. We share concern regarding the environment, and we believe it is indispensable to seek the assistance of the scientific community in order to find non-polluting methods that will allow us to reduce significantly the period of 10 years which has remained static so far. It would be unforgivable if we did not make every possible effort to minimize the Convention's legal weakness during this period. Linking the destruction of all chemical weapons to accession by certain States would seem to be equally unfavourable to the stability of the instrument. In our view, the purported aim of encouraging accession in this way could turn out to be counter-productive and foster tendencies that would in no way contribute to creating a chemical-weapon-free world. It is also important that we should endeavour to discourage initiatives that might lead a State to deem it prudent to wait until the end of the period of stockpile destruction before studying the desirability of acceding to the convention.

As is generally known, the verification system provided for in the draft convention is unprecedented in multilateral and bilateral disarmament treaties. It is clearly important to achieve an adequate verification system. But it is equally important to take into account the costs and benefits so that it does not constitute an excessive financial burden. In this regard, it might be necessary to consider, for example, whether it is appropriate to continue having a broad definition of chemical weapons embracing all toxic chemicals and not just those listed in the schedules, since that would mean that chemical activities in general would be subject to control and verification. It is necessary to draw a distinction between the need to implement an adequate inspection system and the aim of regulating chemical industry activity as a whole. For the sake of the convention's viability, there is a need to devise a verification régime which prevents interference that is not justified by the aims of the inspection. In this regard, the concept of "managed access", in so far as it entails the right to protect legitimate interests, provides a practical basis.

As regards various aspects of the convention now being negotiated, some delegations have attempted to press on us the concept of "CW-capable States". The debate on the general verification system which took place during the 1989 session demonstrated that different aims are being pursued on this

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matter, on which we would prefer not to draw any conclusions. However, we feel it necessary to point out that it is not particularly wise to put on an equal footing for the purposes of the convention countries that have stockpiles and those that have civil chemical industries of a certain size. There are only two types of State under the convention: those that possess chemical weapons and those that do not. Any additional category seems to be aimed more at supporting oligopolistic approaches rather than contributing to meeting the objectives of the convention. In this regard it would seem useful to put aside this concept that we have inherited from the joint Soviet-United States statements in the form of the expression "chemical-weapons-capable States".

When we design the Executive Council we should draw on the experience of the last four decades to improve on models that have not always proved satisfactory. The representativeness of this body must respond to objective guidelines and its size to practical needs. Membership should be based on the criterion of equitable geographical distribution. Furthermore, in terms of the effective application of the convention, the Council should adequately represent the entire international community. If we consider the membership of other executive organs of international organizations, they have around 50 members. The closest model is IAEA, whose Board of Governors works with 35 members; there have never been any complaints about its efficiency. In present international circumstances we would not be surprised if there were schools of thought once again evaluating the United Nations approach based on five regional groups. Bearing in mind what has been said by other delegations in favour of the industrial factor, we would not object to its being taken into account at the regional level. A system of counterweights would thus be achieved, avoiding an obvious imbalance in favour of the highly industrialized countries.

Before concluding, I should like to refer to the question of the prompt entry into force of the convention and various initiatives that States may adopt in pursuit of that objective. In 1987 we mentioned the possibility of reaching a political agreement at the regional level on arrangements for acceding to the convention. For that reason we support the proposal made by the distinguished representative of Venezuela, Ambassador Arteaga at the plenary meeting on 15 March, for a meeting of Latin American and Caribbean countries to publicize the draft convention in order to create the conditions necessary for the convention's speedy entry into force. We hope that those regions that have not yet done so will follow suit.

Regional initiatives could go hand in hand with global initiatives to promote confidence in the convention. In this respect we could promote the idea that States which maintain reservations to the 1925 Geneva Protocol should withdraw them, as Australia and New Zealand did in 1989. In this way the international legal régime banning chemical warfare would be strengthened while at the same time greater transparency and predictability in the international conduct of States would be achieved. In the same spirit it would be indispensable for those States which apply export controls to chemicals to issue declarations making it clear that these provisions would not be applied to States parties to the convention. A universal convention

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which is to be applied in the coming century requires a political understanding to avoid the unilateral or plurilateral establishment of requirements additional to those already agreed to in the convention in order to participate in international co-operation in the peaceful uses of chemistry.

Reality is providing us with many surprises. We hope that this climate will spread to the Conference on Disarmament and that in 1990 the surprise will be the finalization of the draft convention.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Argentina for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair.

Before we proceed with the introduction and consideration of the progress report, I should like to ask whether any delegation wishes to take the floor on any other matter before the Conference. It seems not.

I shall now give the floor to the Chairman of the Ad hoc Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Co-operative Measures to Detect and Identify Seismic Events, Mr. Ola Dahlman, to introduce the progress report of the Group's twenty-ninth session, as contained in document CD/981.

Mr. DAHLMAN (Sweden): It is a pleasure to report on the Group's recent meeting, held from 19 to 29 March, and to introduce its progress report contained in document CD/981, which is in front of you today. This was the twenty-ninth session of the Group, and experts and representatives from 27 countries and the World Meteorological Organization attended. We enjoyed the excellent eminent services provided by the secretariat throughout the session. We greatly appreciated their efforts and we are very impressed by the way they handled our technical material.

The second phase of the Group's Second Large-scale Technical Test which we refer to as GSETT-2, started on 15 January 1990. This phase, which will continue until our summer meeting, is designed as a gradual build-up of the testing of the entire system. The initial part of this phase involved the trial testing of existing facilities of the global system one day per week for eight weeks. The recent meeting of the Group had two main purposes: to review the results of this test period and to plan the remaining stages of GSETT-2.

The results of this first co-ordinated test of the components of the global seismic system of available facilities was quite satisfactory. Valuable experience was obtained by participating countries and facilities as well as by the Group as a whole. This was made possible because of careful planning guided by the co-ordinator of GSETT-2, Mr. Peter Basham of Canada, and the dedicated work of a large number of scientists and technicians at participating facilities around the world.

To operate a system in the real world differs considerably from conceptually designing it. Some of you may recall that during the Group's Technical Test in 1984, we received a message from one station saying "no data

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available - seismometer stolen". This time considerable interruption occurred in data transmission when a communication computer at one of the experimental international data centres was the object of a similar crime.

Twenty-one countries participated in this initial stage of the global test by establishing and operating national data centres usually referred to as NDCs. These 21 NDCs provided data from 46 seismological stations in all. The data volumes contributed by the stations are considerably larger than in the 1984 test, which involved only parameter data. A total data volume corresponding to about 60,000 pages of typed information was exchanged during these eight days. This is about half the size of the Encyclopaedia Britannica. Only the future will tell whether our data contain as much valuable information as those prestigious volumes.

The procedures for operating an NDC, collecting and compiling seismological data and transmitting such data to experimental international data centres are now well established. All countries which tried to establish and operate a national data centre were quite successful in doing so. This should encourage more countries to engage in the experiment.

Broader participation and better coverage of the globe is essential if we are to meet the objectives of GSETT-2. These objectives are, as you may recall, to test the individual components of a modern data exchange system as specified in the Group's fifth report (contained in CD/903), and to test the interaction of these components in a realistic environment - that is, to demonstrate that the system is able to cope with all the seismic events that are observed around the globe.

The Group noted with satisfaction that efforts are under way in some 10 additional countries to join the experiment and to establish national data centres. To encourage even wider participation the Group decided to reduce the technical requirements for participation in the experiment. While maintaining that the prime purpose of GSETT-2 was, and still is, to routinely exchange and analyse level II or wave-form data, the Group agreed that countries that today do not have facilities available for the routine exchange of digital wave-form data may participate by contributing level I or parameter data only. It is now technically possible for every country operating a seismological station - and most countries in the world actually do - to participate in GSETT-2. I do hope this will encourage additional participation in areas where we have only few participants today, in particular in South America, Africa and some parts of Asia.

The Ad hoc Group has for many years enjoyed close co-operation with the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) for global data exchange through the WMO GTS, which is their Global Telecommunication System. The Group and the WMO representatives agreed that further preparatory work was needed to utilize this communication system during GSETT-2 as well.

The Group welcomed a suggestion by WMO that it should be represented in Geneva between 21 and 28 May 1990 at the forthcoming meeting of the World Meteorological Organization's Commission for Basic Systems Working Group on

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the Global Telecommunication System to further discuss this issue. The Ad Hoc Group suggests that, on the understanding that there are no financial implications for the Conference on Disarmament, Mr. Peter Basham, Canada, assisted by Mr. Shigeji Suyehiro of Japan, should be requested to represent the Group at this meeting.

The experimental international data centres which we usually refer to as EIDCs, are operated in Canberra (Australia), Stockholm (Sweden), Moscow (USSR) and Washington in the United States. These centres are key elements of the system being tested during GSETT-2. Much effort and money have been devoted at these four centres to establishing adequate communication facilities and developing and introduring the hardware and software necessary to fulfil their demanding tasks. The introduction of the routine exchange and analysis of wave-form data, which are expected to substantially improve the quality of the results provided by the system, has significantly expanded the tasks of the EIDCs.

There is a saying that he who makes a journey has something to tell. This also applies to those who make scientific experiments. You thereby create new knowledge which is otherwise not available. Such valuable experience was gained at the experimental international data centres during the recent test period. It was found that the work-load was much heavier than expected and that the internal operations of the EIDCs have to be streamlined to allow for continuous operation over an extended period of time. To utilize the full potential of the wave-form data, the seismological methods and procedures have to be further developed and tested. Co-operation among the EIDCs to arrive at a common solution, a process usually referred to as reconciliation, is an important element of the analysis procedure. This was, however, not tested during this initial phase, mainly due to the overload at the EIDCs.

In the light of the experience accumulated so far, the Group revised its preliminary plans and instructions for GSETT-2, and agreed on a revised schedule which is annexed to the progress report.

During the time period until the Group's next session, phase 2 of GSETT-2 will continue with a number of activities, gradually building up to the envisaged full-scale operation of the system to be tested. These activities include the establishment of new national data centres in countries joining GSETT-2 and the establishment and testing of appropriate communication channels between these NDCs and EIDCs. Also included is work to improve the seismological procedures at EIDCs for analysis of wave-form data in particular, and the testing of such procedures among the EIDCs. An informal meeting of experts primarily from the four EIDCs will be hosted by the United States in early June 1990 to review the results of this work. A preparatory operational test will also be conducted involving the exchange of data from all participating stations and the processing of these data at the EIDCs for four days in late June.

The Group also discussed the schedule for phase 3, which is the main phase of GSETT-2. To be able to develop the analysis procedures to take full

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advantage of reported data, in particular the wave-form data, and to enable additional countries - and this is important - to make the necessary preparations, the Group decided to revise the preliminary schedule. The Group now plans to divide the third phase into two parts. The first part consists of one full week of continuous operation of the entire system to be conducted in late autumn, tentatively mid-November, this year. The second and main part of phase 3 will be a full-scale operation for a continuous period of about two months in April and May 1991. Such a schedule, which allows for both intensive testing and careful analysis and evaluation, is considered by the Group to provide the best foundation on which to build a scientifically sound assessment of the proposed system.

The Ad hoc Group suggests that, subject to approval by the Conference on Disarmament, its next session should be convened from 30 July to 10 August 1990, in Geneva.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Chairman of the Ad hoc Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Co-operative Measures to Detect and Identify Seismic Events for introducing the report contained in document CD/981. Does any other delegation wish at this stage to address the progress report of the Ad hoc Group?

As is the practice in the Conference, I shall put the recommendations contained in paragraphs 9 and 13 of the progress report before the Conference for adoption at the plenary meeting to be held on Thursday, 12 April. The recommendation contained in paragraph 13 relates to the suggested dates for the next session of the Ad hoc Group - 30 July to 10 August 1990. As regards paragraph 9, the secretariat has circulated today the draft of a letter that I as President of the Conference will address to the Secretary-General of the World Meteorological Organization in connection with the participation of a member of the Seismic Group in the next session of the WMO Commission for Basic Systems Working Group on the Global Telecommunication System. I am doing so to comply with rule 11 of the rules of procedure, which provide that the President shall, in full consultation with the Conference and under its authority, represent it in its relations with other international organizations. If there are no objections to the text of the letter before the plenary meeting of Thursday, 12 April, that letter will be sent as drafted.

I should like now to turn to another subject. The secretariat has circulated today at my request a timetable for meetings to be held by the Conference and its subsidiary bodies during the coming week. The timetable has been prepared in consultation with the chairmen of subsidiary bodies and, as usual, is merely indicative and can be amended, if needed. As you can see, provision is made on Tuesday, 10 April for the first informal meeting on the substance of agenda item 2, "Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament", immediately after the plenary meeting to be held on that date, as agreed by the Conference at its 547th plenary meeting. I should also like to inform you that Friday, 13 April and Monday, 16 April are official holidays for the United Nations Office at Geneva and that therefore no technical

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services can be provided on those dates. Accordingly, no meeting are planned in the timetable for Friday, 13 April. If there is no objection, I shall take it that the Conference adopts the timetable.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: I have no other business for today, and I now intend to adjourn this plenary meeting. The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will be held on Tuesday, 10 April, at 10 a.m.

The meeting rose at 11.05 a.m.